

**Minutes from a meeting of the Concordia Council on Student Life
Held on September 28, 2007
SGW Campus H-769 10:00 a.m.**

PRESENT: Mr. Roger Cote, Chair; Mr. David Baker, Secretary, Ms. Katie Sheahan, Dr. Sup Mei Graub, Ms. Brigitte St-Laurent, Ms. Melanie Drew, Ms. Laura Stanbra, Mr. Owen Moran, Ms. Anna Barrafato, Dr. Fran Shaver, Mr. Elie Chivi, Mr. Noah Stewart, Ms. Leah del Vecchio, Ms. Ruirui Zhu, Mr. Jermaine McFarlane, Mr. Zach Battat, Ms. Claudie Boujaklian, Mr. William Curran, Ms. Lina Lipscombe, Ms. Lorraine Toscano, Ms. Rose Wangechi

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: Dr. Monica Mulrennan, Ms. Daniela Caputo

ABSENT: Ms. Kristen Gregor, Mr. Jean Philippe Savard, Ms. Katherine Hedrich, Mr. Jean Brisebois

DELEGATES: Ms. Johanne De Cubellis for Ms. Marilyn Lessard

1. INTRODUCTION

After a brief introduction of Mr. Roger Côté, Acting Dean of Students and Chair of CCSL, there is a round table introduction of members. The Chair explains that not everyone on CCSL is a voting member (ie. the observers). He explains that at present there was no representative present from the GSA. Only one representative was nominated to CCSL from the GSA so far (Mr. Savard, absent).

2. MANDATE

There is an introduction of the CCSL mandate by the Chair. The mandate was circulated by e-mail. The chair would like to speak of the essence of what CCSL is trying to achieve. The Concordia Council on Student Life is interested in providing an environment to nurture and enhance a rich student life environment and to give voice to students on the development and offerings of Student Services. CCSL is unique in this way as there are not many other committees that look at this level of responsibility. One of the goals of the committee is to look at the needs of the clientele are, to respond to these needs in order to best serve students.

The Chair mentioned that meetings are recorded to help prepare minutes. The Chair asks if there are any objections- either now or in private later. No one objects.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Chair asks if there are any modifications to the agenda. Mr. Moran asks to include some items for healthy campus initiatives. It is added under Reports and Items of Information (item 5 on the agenda).

Mr. Stewart moves to approve the agenda. Ms. Del Vecchio seconds. **Motion passes.**

4. Remarks From the Chair

The Chair congratulates the student associations for the orientation activities. He remarks that it is a very good thing and gives students a sense of community. The Chair has spoken to many students who attended the orientation and all were impressed. The Chair also congratulates the Departments. Financial Aid, Birks Student Services, FAST. As a result of the FAST initiative, line-ups of students waiting to gain access to service subsided considerably faster at Birks Student Service Centre and the Financial Aid and Awards Office.

The Chair informs the council that there was a change at the Dean of Students' Office. Mr. Keith Pruden, former Dean of Students and Chair of CCSL, has left to return full time to Recreation & Athletics. The Chair informs the council that the new Dean of Students has been named during the summer. The new Dean will be Ms. Elizabeth Morey, a well-known and experienced Concordian who is presently working at a College in the UAE. She will be starting her position next March. Mr. Côté will continue as Chair for the full academic year to give Ms. Morey a chance to get reacquainted with the University.

The Chair mentions that the Graduate Students' Association is having their elections this week. Today is the final day of the elections.

The Chair mentions that he attended the Forces Avenir Gala, which was held in Sherbrooke. There were three Concordia Finalists and all three won. Mr. Gabriel Bran Lopez won for personality AVENIR, and Ms. Kinia Adamczyk, who was in Holland but participated via live feed, also won the personality AVENIR award. R4 Compost also won for project in the AVENIR Environnement category. The Chair mentioned that in tomorrow's newspapers, Forces Avenir has a dedicated section in the papers, listing all the winners. Hopefully there will be more student contributors in the future.

Mr. Stewart had some questions for the Remarks portion of the agenda. Mr. Stewart asked if the student associations will be able to meet the new Dean before March 2008. The Chair mentions that she will be coming in November for some meetings with various people, and one of these days includes meeting the student associations. There may also be a second opportunity later on. The Second comment Mr. Stewart asks is why the GSA already has one representative on CCSL

(absent) if their elections are not finished. The Chair explains that due to the fact that there was no executive of the GSA this summer and early autumn, the GSA council had to appoint graduate students to various committees, such as BOG, Senate and CCSL. Once elections are over, a second CCSL graduate representative will be mandated to attend CCSL.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF MAY 4TH 2007

There were no observations to be made on pages one, two, three, six or seven. Mr. Moran had observations on page four. On the last paragraph, it states the council on the Healthy Campus Initiative were unable to meet to date. He would like it corrected to: they only met once to date. Mr. Moran also had observations for page five. Regarding the take the stairs campaign, there was a pamphlet distributed at the last meeting that was supposed to be attached to the last meeting's minutes, but was not. If anyone had a copy, Mr. Moran, Ms. Sheahan and Ms. Wangechi want a copy.

Ms. Sheahan moved the approval of the minutes and this was seconded by Mr. Moran. **Motion was carried.**

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Dr. Shaver suggests that page numbers be built into the minutes. She also remarks that the previous Chair had agreed to discuss the fire safety issue and asks whether the Chair has a report to show the council. Since Mr. Pruden was the last chair, Mr. Côté was not aware of this. He will be more than happy to look into it and perhaps also invite Mr. Normand Lanthier of Environmental Health and Safety to a future meeting.

Mr. Côté enquired about an update on the cafeteria (Hall building, 7th floor) changes. Ms. De Cubellis explains that because the new Grey Nuns Residence did not have a kitchen that could be used as a cafeteria, Hospitality Concordia had to look into other options. The original plan was to have a kitchen built into the Grey Nuns building which would include a meal plan for students, but this was not possible at the moment. As such, they looked into having a special dining room built on the 7th floor of the Hall building. The Area was built as a closed area because, for the first time, they were offering students an all-you-can-eat meal. Other universities have a similar plan and the dining hall is always closed off because of the all-you-can-eat. For safety reasons, the dining Hall has access to stairs.

This project was a rush to accommodate the Grey Nuns students by September 1st 2007, Labour Day. So things had to move fast. The dining room was not just for residence students, it was for anyone who wished to eat there: students, faculty and staff. You do not need a meal plan to use it. But the idea was for it to be primarily used for residence students.

Ms. Del Vecchio comments-that the space looks beautiful and, along with the new CSU offices, gives the 7th floor a completed look. However, she mentions that there was discontent with students because it took up what could have been valuable student space. The Mezzanine was already removed as a bookable space, and it seems student space is being removed quite regularly. She asks if more space could be found for students to eat or lounge on the seventh floor.

Ms. De Cubellis says that yes, more space is being looked into because Hospitality Concordia understood that students need access to more space for eating and to lounge. As such, they wanted to react to this issue quickly. They are willing to look into perhaps getting additional furniture so they have more space to eat and for People's Potato customers. The space they used was the dining area for when the Servedy was open. Since the Servedy was closed, it appeared that the space was unoccupied and without ownership. Hospitality Concordia also has to look into more space and tables for people to eat. The lack of tables becomes very obvious in September.

Dr. Shaver asks for clarification: is the meal plan available to anyone? Both Ms. De Cubellis and Ms. Drew remark that yes, it is open to anyone who would like to participate in the plan. Ms. Shaver asks if the Loyola residents can have their meal plan downtown. Ms. De Cubellis says that yes, the meal plan is not restricted by campus.

As per the last page of the previous minutes, Ms. Novoa requested the amount of funding given out to Special Projects. Mr. Pruden had said he would send out an official e-mail later in the day with this detail. Mr. Côté is not sure if this was done, but will look into it.

7. Reports and Items of Information

Item 5.2 2006-2007 Recreation and Athletic Year End Financial Statement

The Chair tables the 2006-2007 Recreation and Athletics Year-end Statement as well as the 2006-2007 Student Services Year-end Statement. Ms. Sheahan has to leave early due to previous engagements, so she begins explaining her year-end statement.

Due to the new facilities at SGW- the fitness centre and gym- her department was pleasantly surprised that activities flourished beyond expectations at the downtown facilities, but also at Loyola. 18, 000 individuals used the facilities last year. Students have been very enthusiastic and have participated tremendously at both gyms. The hand-out is an identification of sources of revenue which is done at the end of each academic year.

Salaries were approved at 1.9 million and the total revenue was 3 million. The fact that the Recreation & Athletics received an increase in fees per credit from students helped, but they also generated income from various other sources such as ticket sales, membership fees and sponsorship. The big change last year was in event sales and registration. Because the FTE's were lower than expected, this impacted their budget somewhat as did the fact that new equipment had to be purchased for the new gym.

Recreation and Athletics would like to keep the new gym well maintained. As such, there are expenses to keep equipment up to date, and looking fresh and clean (through service contracts). These activities are called Rep and Rep (repairs and replacements). Lastly, there was a modest amount of revenue (40 000\$) that was identified to bring forward this year. In previous years the volume (number of registrations) was so low, they did not have to take this initiative.

Ms. Lussier has a comment. As a former member of the Victoria Gym days, she says kudos. The showers are clean and the services are fantastic. The staff is phenomenal and there are great instructors.

Dr. Shaver wonders if Recreation and Athletics can implement a programme to have people use the stairs more. Ms. Sheahan has been talking about this with Mr. Moran because they were inspired by the Ça Marche programme. Dr. Shaver says there is considerable traffic congestion on the escalators and the stairs are empty. Ms. Del Vecchio adds that this problem is further exacerbated by the fact that the elevators are under renovation.

Ms Sheahan also mentions that they had an open house on Labour day, something they will do again. It was a huge hit. Ms. Del Vecchio mentions that she brought new students to the gym and they were very impressed with the facilities. Ms. Sheahan thanks her and has to leave the meeting from her previous engagement.

Item 5.1 2006-2007 Student Services year End Financial Statement

The Chair speaks about the 2006-2007 Student Services year-end statement. He mentions that there is a Continuing Education grant that goes towards student services (non-credit courses). This is the reason there is a Continuing Education student on CCSL.

The Chair mentions that when CCSL approved the student services fee, it was in anticipation of FTE growth according to the University's enrolment projections. FTE's have been plateauing at 24 000 each year, and not on a steady increase as expected. Student associations will also have to keep this in mind when projecting their budgets, not just university departments.

This was not so much a problem for 2006-2007 because there were significant savings resulting from vacant positions (ie. Health Services needs a nurse, a search is done for one, the university saves on salary during these searches). The money saved from these vacant positions will go towards making up for the lack of FTE growth in the current and next year fiscal year.

It is important to note that FTE's are not decreasing, they are simply remaining steady. As such provisions have to be made financially. The budgeted FTE's for the current year are approximately 24,450 and for next year will be 24,700. The Chair reminds new members that we operate on a three year budget cycle, which CCSL approves.

Item 5.3 CCSL Sub-Committee Appointments

The next document that is handed out to the council is a list of CCSL committees and their composition (Attached). Mr. Stewart mentions that an amendment was made to the composition of two of the committees last year: the CCSL Project Funding Committee and the CCSL Awards Committee. The Chair said we will work on that assumption until he can look into this further.

The first page of the handout is in regards to the committees as they exist now. The last two pages are in regards to starting two new committees: the CCSL Committee on Communication and Awareness Raising of the Student Services Sector and the CCSL Committee on Alternative Revenue Generation. It is mentioned that CCSL puts aside \$165 000 each year for student projects. This is in reference to the first committee on page one.

CCSL Project Funding Committee:

The committee is comprised of one student services Director (the Chair has asked Ms. Lussier to chair this committee. She agrees.), three undergraduate students and one graduate student. The committee allocates money to groups or individuals who have brought projects forward which are in need of funding. The funds are administered out of the Dean of Students' Office, but it is the committee not just the Dean who decides what projects to support.

Mr. Stewart mentions that last year, the council decided to add one more student to each of the standing committees (Awards and Special Projects). The Chair says that we will work on these assumptions, and if we need to go back to the previous method, this can be looked at again another time.

The Awards committee:

Even though the awards happen in the spring, the Chair mentions that we need candidates for this as well. The Chair will designate someone from the Dean of Students' Office on this committee.

Housing and Job Bank Committee:

The Chair explains that there are only a few members who sit on the Housing and Job Bank Committee. CCSL gives money to them. This is a liaison committee to meet with the Off Campus Housing/Job Bank and review their needs. The Chair was on this committee. It is uncertain if this will remain so.

New Committees:

There was a proposal made last year by Mr. Stewart and Mr. Ferrero for the creation of two new committees. The first being the CCSL Committee on Communication and Awareness Raising of the Student Services Sector and the second one being the CCSL Committee on Alternative Revenue Generation. The committees should remain small so that it is easy for everyone to meet.

The Alternative Revenue Committee will look into ways to reduce dependence on student fees. The Chair asks Mr. Stewart what the committee focused on last year. Ms. Drew was the Chair of that committee and speaks. She says they looked at the issue of sponsorships, and a fee that could be adjusted for different students, depending on their financial constraints. They are presently looking into governmental sponsorship. They are also looking at what types of fees are coming in and if they could be adjusted.

Ms. Drew foresees this committee heading in the direction of finding ways of creating additional funding. Mr. Stewart adds that the need for this committee came out of student opposition to increased fees. The Chair decides that the committees remain as is. When the GSA elections are over, the GSA will have be asked if they have interest in these committees.

Other issues

Mr. Moran makes a comment. As a sustainability advocate, he mentions that paper and energy could have been saved when making the handouts. Changing the margins, changing the fonts, and Ms. Del Vecchio adds that hand-outs can also be double sided. Ms. Shaver mentions that her office printers are on default double-sided printing. Ms. Del Vecchio asks Mr. Curran about library printers and if there is an option to print double sided. Mr. Curran says that they looked into this a few years ago. Some issues came up in regards to double sided printing, namely the fact that users do not always know that they will be printing double sided, do not change the default and in turn this can waste more paper. He says he can look into it again and report back at the next meeting. Ms. Shaver asks if there was any news on Senate voting to allow students to hand in their term papers, printed double sided. She is aware that some teachers are not thrilled at this prospect. Ms. Del Vecchio says that it is supposed to go to Senate but she has not heard word of it yet.

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Mr. Moran gives a brief summary of the Campus Wellness Committee. A brief history is given. Their goal is to support healthy environments for students, staff and faculty. They now have a website up for the initiative (<http://healthycampus.concordia.ca>). He mentions that no other university in Canada has this sort of initiative and is only aware of one American university that does, the University of North Carolina. Their vision and mission is listed on the site. Mr. Moran reads part of the mission in order to clarify what their mandate is. They are looking to synthesize all existing health initiative services onto this one site. Ms. Lussier, Chair of the committee, and Mr. Moran contacted various Concordia departments in order to have this done. There was also some progress over the summer when Ms. Zhu contacted one of her professors who has now incorporated the initiative into his course. They have since met two groups of students who are working on projects in relation to the initiative for this class. Mr. Moran would like three students and one more staff/faculty member to be involved with this committee. The next initiative they are looking into is the Take the Stairs Campaign. Mr. Moran has spoken to the Normand Lanthier and a professor in Fine Arts to find ways to make using the stairs more fun. New signage is being looked into, art can be put up in staircases, perhaps students could paint the walls, perhaps music could be pumped in. Mr. Moran would like to meet with Ms. Del Vecchio to discuss ways to improve the initiative. Ms. Toscano asks if they could look into access to staircases for the Library Building. Right now, there is no access to stairs and it is very frustrating. If you need to go down one flight, you have to take the elevator.

8. AGENDA PRIORITIES FOR 2007-2008 CCSL MEETINGS. OPEN DISCUSSION: STUDENT SUCCESS/PERSISTENCE.

What are the important issues to accomplish this year? The Chair mentions that there have been numerous surveys being done recently in regards to retention. One of them is called NSSE. Another survey was conducted for students to share experiences, both academic and non-academic, of their experiences at Concordia. Brad Tucker can come to a CCSL meeting if the council is interested, to give us a presentation of these surveys. The Chair invites council to share what are some of its issues. What experiences have colleagues, friends and classmates had? What challenges are students facing? Administrators who work with students have their vision, but what are issues important to students? How do you make students more successful?

Mr. Stewart comments that for students, it is a question of access. Student space or student access to space being one issue. Tuition going up is another access issue for students. There is also the question of access to student services. Perhaps council could keep the issue of access in mind and make it a guiding principle for this year.

Mr. Chivi comments that he has been a student here for four years. Remarks made to him by other students involve approachability. Students do not feel that staff/faculty are approachable and as a result they are denying themselves access to services. He understands that during orientation everyone is stressed, not just students, and often staff do not have enough time to fully devote to each student. As a result, a students' first encounter is marred. Because he deals a lot with international students, this could be an international student issue only. It would be significant if council could delve into that. Ms. Zhu suggests that because there are many offices students have to deal with, it becomes overwhelming. Perhaps there could be a day where more directors are present, visibly. This gives groups an opportunity to let staff/faculty know what kinds of things are happening. It would be ideal if student services could know where students need help and where they do not, in advance. Mr. Moran calls this establishing a culture of welcoming. That we should interact with each other in a civil way. Just be good to one another. This is part of healthy living.

Dr. Graub asks if there are enough resources for students who not only study but who are active in associations. Her department was involved in a committee recently that looked into the various factors why students fail. There seems to be many layers to this issue, it is not necessarily straightforward. Ms. Del Vecchio says that sometimes students are not aware of resources there to help them. Sometimes students do not know that they can apply for an incomplete, for example. Right now there are posters everywhere. This is not always the best solution to educating people. At one point, students become so used to seeing a ton of posters that they just walk right by them without reading. There is so much information spread out there, that it is not easy for students to find a central location to find all the information they need to be informed.

Mr. Chivi mentions that he worked at Counseling & Development, as a student mentor. He agrees that people do not know about things such as workshops being offered to them. They have put on workshops and only three people would show up. Part of the problem is that Information Services is always so busy that students take it upon themselves to seek out information. If they are late for a workshop and Information Services is packed with people, the student would often prefer to go find out where that workshop is, rather than wait. Signage is not clear enough. Ms. Barrafato mentions that her department has booths set up on the Mezzanine and one of the most

talked about things is time management. Every time they come up with a new workshop, they try to figure out ways to get students to know about them. They would like to work with the CSU for help in getting the word out, she says.

The Chair remarks that we need to find ways to engage and connect with students. It is not always up to the student to engage with us. We also have to make that connection happen. We need to sensitize others at the university about this.

Ms. Zhu says that, for instance, if a student is failing, it could be embarrassing for them. When credit card companies see unusual activity on your account they send you a letter. Perhaps Concordia could do the same to students who seem to be doing poorly in school. Is there a system that can catch this? The Chair says that there is presently a system to identify students who are doing poorly and the university does send to these students as it is also done when students improve their performance at which a letter congratulating them is sent. Dr. Shaver suggests that Terry Too come to a CCSL meeting. This is the person that sends out letters to students.

The Chair adds that there were 4200 students in good academic standing last year who did not return. Terry Too and Dr Sup Mei Graub and other contributors are working on a retention committee right now and could be asked to address CCSL on the issue if council is interested. Dr. Graub is interested in this. Mr. Stewart asks if a report could be submitted to council instead. Council meetings are short enough already. The Chair suggests perhaps a bit of both, and perhaps a longer meeting, with lunch served.

Mr. Chivi expands. For example, plagiarism is a big issue at the university. He has seen many posters put out by the university on this serious issue. Course outlines will also have a section devoted to plagiarism. So if the university wants to get the word out about workshops available to help students, there are ways for this to be done in an effective way.

Mr. Curran says that how you market something one year is different to how you market something another year. The audience always changes. For example, there will always be people using the library, but we would need for people to be successful in using library services. The way to create this sort of success can change year to year.

Ms. De Cubellis asks if council could look into different tools and methods to advertise. There are too many ways at the moment, maybe some filtering can be done. When students are confronted with too much information, they no longer listen. Right now each department sends out information to students. Perhaps all these departments should come together and prepare something together, to make things more centralized. Perhaps a book of all the services and regulations listed and students would view this as a bible of Student Services.

9. STUDENT LIFE ISSUES

The bookstore recently won an award for sustainability in regards to their recycling efforts (toner, boxes, batteries), Ms. Lipscombe says. Recently, a company donated recycled binders which the bookstore sells very cheaply (about two dollars). They also sell recycled lab coats. The bookstore also wanted to get rid of plastic bags. They got other universities on board with this project (ie. McGill and University of Alberta). In the beginning of the school year they gave them out for free, but now they are charging a small fee for them. Some people still wanted plastic bags and complained. Since they had a few left over, they gave them the plastic bags but charged them for it. The money collected from the bag sales go to the Emergency Food Fund and to Sustainable Concordia.

Another point of interest, the bookstore recently got Naomi Klein to come speak for the launch of her new book. This was thanks to a new book manager that the bookstore employs. Tickets were sold for this event and it was a great success. If ever anyone has any suggestions for future events the bookstore could possibly hold, Ms. Lipscombe would greatly appreciate any feedback.

Ms. Lipscombe mentions that a couple of years ago they implemented a new customized book system which people greatly appreciated. However, students had to come to the bookstore to check availability. So, the bookstore added a stock alert system to avoid trips to the bookstore. Now the student will know in advance if a particular book is available at the bookstore.

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Ms. Stanbra reminds council that that the in course bursary deadline is coming up on October 12th. There is approximately 300 000\$ in funds available to students in these funds.

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Mr. Stewart asks council if it would be possible for decision making feedback from CCSL in regards to the interim president. What are the needs of Student Services in regards to an interim president. Perhaps a report could be made to BOG in this regards.

The Chair says that perhaps we should focus our attention to the titular president search rather than the interim president search. Council could make a report of the attributes it would like to see in the new incumbent and submit it to BOG. Mr. Stewart also comments that council could also approach the Board and ask them the reasons the President and the Board agreed for Dr. Lajeunesse to leave. The Chair suggests that the Chair of the BoG has already addressed this point and that it perhaps would be best to communicate our expectations of a new presidential incumbent. A draft document could be prepared for the next meeting. That is the chain of command. Mr. Stewart also wants students to be asked their input on this report. He also feels that perhaps it is best that an internal candidate be asked to assume the position of President, rather than always going to an outside source. Perhaps CCSL can make this recommendation.

Ms. Drew says that she does not share that sentiment. She was an outside candidate. It was definitely a learning challenge for her, but she was excited to learn. She does not feel comfortable making this sort of recommendation. The Chair remarks that perhaps Mr. Stewart is speaking specifically about the search for an interim President, not the search for the titular President. Mr. Stewart agrees. Both the Chair and Dr. Shaver feel that the focus of the report

should be on the search for the titular President, not the search for Interim President. This would be good in order to formulate a profile, the Chair says.

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Dr. Shaver asks Ms. Boujaklian about the use of escalators and what efforts we can put in diverting traffic to the staircases. Ms. Boujaklian says that additional signage was put up, and clearly it is not enough, but it is difficult to get people to use the stairs.

NEXT MEETING

The Chair asks if council would like to extend the next meeting until 1:30 p.m. This is agreed.

TERMINATION OF MEETING

A motion to terminate the meeting was made by Ms. Del Vecchio and seconded by Mr. Battat. The motion was carried.